

STATEMENT BY SENATOR STYLES BRIDGES (R., N.H.) ON THE FLOOR OF THE  
SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 1948.

FOR RELEASE UPON DELIVERY

Mr. President:

A week ago today the President of the United States, addressing both Houses of Congress, offered hope for a change in American foreign policy. He indicated the Soviet Union by name as a ruthless aggressor reaching out greedily for yet more victims. His speech was given resonance by the fact that it coincided with the signing in Brussels of a 50 year military alliance by Great Britain, France and the three Benelux nations. It was given heightened meaning by the fresh memory of the treacherous overthrow of Czechoslovak democracy, dramatized by the death of Jan Masaryk.

I am convinced that the American people, like nearly all of us in this chamber, welcome the new firmness of the President. Our complaint is that he waited so long to speak out and that he did not go far enough. The aggressor whom he described has no ear for subtleties. He hears and understands only the language of power and the vocabulary of action. We dare not leave any fuzzy margins for doubt and misunderstanding in Moscow about our solemn determination to check the Soviet march of aggression.

Ever since Teheran some of us have been sick at heart as we watched the fruits of the hard-won victory, paid for with American blood and substance, being denied by totalitarian Russia. By this time there are few Americans so blind that they do not see the futility of our long years of appeasement; so callous that they do not share a sense of guilt over the tragic events.

The President attested formally what we already knew so well: that our humiliating road of appeasement has led the human race into another blind alley of military menace. Beginning with Teheran, through Yalta, Potsdam, and many conferences of inglorious secrecy, we have tried to bribe the masters of the Kremlin by throwing them chunks of territory and the freedoms of innocent populations.

This was morally shameful and politically unsound. It failed dismally. The power-drugged men of Moscow, like the men of Berlin before them, have refused to stay bribed. Each new appeasement has served them merely as a platform for launching new aggressions, in turn requiring new appeasements, in an endless chain.

The United States was the arsenal of democracy, even before we officially joined the struggle. It was the nation which simultaneously perfected an amazing industrial organization and mobilized the greatest fighting machine in all history. The shabby lies trumpeted by the Soviets

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cannot drown out the truth that the magnificent American contribution was decisive in winning the war. Without America the Soviet regime could not have survived.

It is our own fault that we failed to use the immense strength in our hands to guarantee a decent, equitable and enduring peace. Let us be manly enough to acknowledge that fault and to recognize that it implies a moral obligation to repair the tragic damage that has already been done.

It seems wise to me to review our mistakes, for the sake of clarity in our thinking at the present critical juncture. At Teheran, against the wishes of our British ally, we made fatal concessions to the Soviet Union. Before the war was over, we had sacrificed two of our allies, Poland and Yugoslavia. At Yalta we not only confirmed the Teheran betrayals but assigned half of Europe and the industrial heart of China -- Manchuria -- to the tender mercies of a government which knows no tenderness and mocks at mercy.

At San Francisco America joined with Russia on the issue of the veto which I said at the time would make the United Nations impotent. Then, in hammering out the peace compacts with minor enemy nations, we surrendered to Moscow total dominion over Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary. In Italy America agreed to a ~~reparations~~ reparations scheme that siphons off economic aid as fast as we can pump it in. We created a focus of war infection in Trieste. We left Italy exposed to the depredations of a communist fifth column supported by the armed forces of neighboring Titoslavia. We few who opposed the Italian Treaty of Peace have seen our prophecy become a tragic reality.

Our indecisive and vacillating foreign policy has jeopardized the military and political position of our country. It has sullied America's moral banners. Do we dare forget that it was under slogans of freedom, justice and democracy that we sent our men and women to face death on the battlefields of the world? Can we live with our own conscience as we watch those promises to our glorious dead perverted and violated and despised?

Clear thinking and courageous action now demand that this recent record be again examined. Nothing is gained by glossing over the fact that many of those now honestly eloquent in warning against the Soviet threat to peace are themselves responsible for the situation. They participated in the sell-out of principle which has crowded the world into the present crisis. They connived in hiding immoral commitments and unprincipled dealings from the American people.

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On each and every occasion when the late President or the State Department succumbed to Soviet pressure with another installment of appeasement, I put my opposition on record in this chamber. On January 23, 1944, within a month after Mr. Roosevelt's return from Teheran, I said in a speech on this floor -- and I quote --

"What really happened in Teheran? Why is it that the plans for a series of European confederations, advanced by our own leaders, have suddenly been forgotten? Is it our policy to sit by and by doing nothing allow the swallowing up of the Balkan nations? Our people want to know whether the rights of smaller and weaker peoples have been traded on the auction block of power politics with the passive consent if not the open connivance of the American government."

Those questions brought a rejoinder from the distinguished Senator from Texas, Mr. Connally, who was then Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. This is what he said -- and again I quote --

"The Senator from Texas will, at the proper time, when it is pertinent, certainly insist not only on the people knowing about it, but the Senate of the United States knowing about it. But the Senator from Texas is not inclined, in the midst of military operations, to try to to anticipate what is going to happen after the war, and go around with a sharp stick punching every ally we have, and mouthing about someone having told something, when the President in explicit language said no commitments had been made. If the Senator wants any more assurances than that, I think he should take a trip across the seas and privately investigate this matter."

Well, now the people of America know what happened at Teheran and what was behind the late President's explicit assurances that no commitments had been made. We have learned the grim truth the hard way. Stalin and Molotov and Vishinsky told us when they grabbed Yugoslavia and Poland. They told us again when they took Bulgaria and Rumania and Hungary. They are still telling us in Czechoslovakia and Finland and Manchuria. They will continue to tell us until we summon the self-respect to tell them.

I believe firmly that if the American people had been taken into confidence by their leaders 140 million people in Eastern Europe and millions more in northern China would not have been delivered into Soviet enslavement. Unhappily we learned the sad facts slowly, piecemeal, in a series of shocks, when it was too late for our public opinion to undo the

mischief.

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On May 23, 1944, when it became apparent that our valorous allies Poland and Yugoslavia were being abandoned to a totalitarian fate, I again addressed this House. I said and I quote - -

"Certainly the American people have not gone into this struggle for the purpose of turning over Europe to the control of any nation or group of nations, much less to substitute the terrors of one dictatorship for another. It is not and it has not been our intention to divide, actually or in effect, the war-torn European nations into special spheres of influence or to reduce this or that section of Europe under the control of any nation, no matter how benevolently inclined such a nation might profess to be .... We have no desire to be a party to the establishing of any post-war organization which is to be dominated by one, two, three or four nations."

Those words of nearly four years ago sound mild against the background of events that followed. The reality turned out to be even more horrifying than our most grim predictions.

In fairness it should be pointed out that many Americans in some measure share the blame for these years of appeasement for which the world pays such a heavy price. Some who saw the evil being brewed could not make their voices heard. Some thought it their duty to be silent anyway. Many, wholly in the interests of a united American front before the world, joined in a so-called bipartisan foreign policy which unfortunately was sometimes operated to conceal mistakes and soft-pedal criticism.

Though men on this side of the aisle shared responsibility for the political phase of war and post-war policies, they never had an equal role in making those policies. They never enjoyed the full confidence of the Administration. Regrettably, we sometimes surrendered the function of a loyal opposition so important in a democracy, without receiving the benefits of genuine participation in the development of policy.

We Americans are a virile people, nurtured on pioneer traditions. We have the courage to face critical issues. It was a serious blunder - - a blunder the results of which are now all too evident - - that the President and his associates failed to trust us. Had the whole nation been allowed to know the facts and debate their implications, had the processes of democratic action not been blocked by headstrong and ego-centric leaders, we would have come closer to achieving the purposes for which Americans fought, worked, and sacrificed.

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I do not mean to impugn the motives of our war-time leadership. No doubt they meant well. Yet our late President and three Secretaries of State -- Hull, Stettinius and Byrnes -- failed to understand that the Soviet Union was busy not only waging a military war against Germany, but a diplomatic war against their allies. They refused to heed those who did understand.

There is reason to believe that Mr. Roosevelt just before he died had become aware and alarmed by the course of events he had helped set in motion. Certainly Mr. Byrnes, as his recent pronouncements indicate, no longer has any illusions about the bankruptcy of our policies of appeasement. Two fundamental concepts of life, one geared to human freedom and the other to state despotism, face each other throughout the world. Those concepts are bodied forth in two great nations, the United States of America and the Soviet Union.

That confrontation was unnecessary. It could have been prevented. It is the direct result of short-sighted American policies. Once again the security of our country and the very survival of Western civilization are being menaced. The only way in which we can head off a showdown in war is to act firmly, swiftly, boldly now, before it is too late.

The lateness of the present hour can best be measured by stating the advantage we have lost and the advantage Russia has gained. From the border nations of western Europe, the Communists now control the earth eastward to our own territory of Alaska. Whole nations, almost whole continents, have become engulfed by the Red tide of tyranny with which the sea of Soviet power has swelled since the war's end. The Communist conspiracy now dominates the largest land-mass and the greatest number of peoples ever brought under a single control in all mortal history.

We of America, we who have never been conquered in war nor matched in productive power, have much to dread until we can restrain the flow of Soviet expansion. It would be suicidal to ignore this menace or to underestimate it. If allowed to expand unchecked, it may become powerful enough to impose its will not only on the whole Eurasian continent but on our Western Hemisphere as well. That is why we have no choice but to act now to stop that expansion, and then to reduce it.

We must recognize communism for what it is; a vast international conspiracy with tentacles in every country in the world, our own included. Whatever it may be in theory, it is in practice a great engine of power, operated by desperate, ruthless, unscrupulous men, who have no respect for

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blood-bath if we leave them any chance of winning world dominion.

We must not tolerate further the infiltration of Communist agents within the institutions and government of our own or of any other free country. For the sake of our own security, we cannot countenance the loss of freedom in the few remaining independent nations of the world.

For we in America, despite all our seeming wealth and apparent security, are living in peril of our very existence. The community of free and independent nations contracts with every new acquisition of territory by the Communists. If the Red tide continues unabated this our own isle of freedom will become smaller and smaller until it too is washed under. To stop this tide it is my belief that this nation has no worthy alternative but to marshal adequately its forces for peace.

Even at the cost of great personal sacrifice and hardship, the citizens of free America must exterminate Communist influence within our own government, oppose Communist hostility along our borders, and undermine Communist tyranny in areas already conquered.

I propose that we undertake at once these following steps:

1. KEEP THE UNITED STATES FISCALLY SOUND AND ECONOMICALLY STRONG.

It will jeopardize our position at home and in the family of nations if we carelessly waste our substance. The needs of our own people and our own security must be adequately met if we are to be geared for the demands of nations we would help, for economic disaster at home would spell hopelessness abroad too.

2. REGISTER ALL COMMUNISTS IN THE UNITED STATES. The American people have a right to know who among their number are disloyal to their country. The time is past when we can afford to be ignorant of the identity or whereabouts of those who would destroy America from within.

3. BAR FROM FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT "SECURITY RISKS". The Federal Bureau of Investigation should be authorized to investigate independently and thoroughly all government personnel. Regardless of previous findings of so-called loyalty boards, persons should not be retained in the employ of the federal government who are deemed a "security risk" by the F. B. I. We cannot afford the luxury of doubt when the safety and security of our country is at stake.

4. DEAL WITH RUSSIAN ALIENS IN THIS COUNTRY ON THE SAME BASIS AS RUSSIA DEALS WITH AMERICANS. My reciprocity bill, S. J. Res 163, which for more than three months has been pending before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, should be enacted at once.

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5. PROTECT OUR SCIENTIFIC ADVANTAGE. Any exchange of patents and scientific information which benefits Communist aggression should be stopped.

6. PROHIBIT TRADING WHICH BENEFITS COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. As we seek to bolster freedom our wealth must not be poured into the potential war machines of hostile nations.

7. ENCOURAGE THE UNDERGROUND BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN. We should attempt in every way possible to maintain contact between free America and those within conquered areas who still have freedom in their hearts.

8. EXTEND RECOVERY AID ONLY TO THOSE WHO IRREVOCABLY AND PUBLICLY ALIGN THEMSELVES WITH THE UNITED STATES.

9. PROVIDE MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO THOSE WHO OPPOSE AGGRESSION. No foe of communism should suffer defeat because we have withheld military supplies.

10. FORTIFY OUR OVERSEAS BASES. We must be ready to use effectively any strategic geographical positions available to us.

11. INCREASE OUR MILITARY AND NAVAL STRENGTH. Force must be available to command respect for our diplomacy and to implement our commitments. Military, Naval and Submarine strength must be adequate to any need.

12. DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A STRIKING AIR FORCE. It is acknowledged that this is the first line of offense or defense in this atomic age.

13. MOBILIZE OUR MANPOWER. The authorized strength of our military, naval, and air forces must be maintained.

14. COORDINATE PLANS FOR INDUSTRIAL MOBILIZATION. There must be an adequate plan for full military production in time of need.

15. COORDINATE A PLAN OF OFFENSE AND DEFENSE. There should be absolutely no delay in the completion of a long-range strategy by our military, naval and air force leaders.

16. STRENGTHEN THE UNITED NATIONS. Every effort should be made to use effectively the machinery of the United Nations in the cause of peace whenever and wherever possible. Immediate efforts should be made to correct obvious defects in the United Nations Charter such as the veto power.

17. PROCLAIM THE TRUTH. The time is over-ripe to meet the communist propaganda of the lie head-on with a terrific propaganda of the truth. The peoples of the world should know the truth concerning the advantages of living in a Democracy as opposed to living in Communist slavery.

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Mr. President, lip service will not preserve the blessings of representative government and freedom here at home or anywhere else in the world. Half-way measures will not command respect for our good intentions or our commitments. Half-way measures will not stem the Red tide.

The President of the United States was firm when he spoke to us a week ago. But the gaps he left are obvious to our own people and they are obvious to the tenants of the Kremlin. The steps I have recommended to the Senate today can fill the gaps. We can make of them a message to the directors of aggression in Moscow that there shall be no loopholes in our struggle for honor and decency and justice in the world; that there shall be no loopholes in our determination to keep America secure.

The American people have a right to live from day to day with the feeling that this nightmare of Communist expansion will be stopped. Their sacrifices in two World Wars entitle them to real hope for peace and security. They deserve more than "soap bubble" diplomacy. They deserve the peace of mind which can be theirs if this government will take and maintain a firm stand for American principles.

The people are alert to the Communist threat. They are aware that America could not long remain free in a totalitarian world. They are aware that independent nations everywhere are dependent upon each other for survival.

Mr. President, this is a score on which the rank and file of our citizens lead their government. I have offered my program as a vehicle by which the government can catch up with the matchless spirit of the American people.